Strategy Guide for the Manta Fighter Pilots

Ornithological Observations by Worrior1

Your mission is to destroy all 15 enemy battleships—Super-Dreadnoughts—before they drain the mineral resources from planets in your galactic sector.

As a weapon you have an extremely agile and heavily armed single-seated Manta-class fighter. Our intelligence is hard at work to get the original enemy battleship blueprints and fighter pilot instructions. But we haven't been able to get our hands on them. So, this guide gathers findings and survival tips reported by our brave pilots who have survived their missions.

Enemy Defence System

Enemy Super-Dreadnoughts are very cleverly protected from attackers. There are five different defence systems.

1. Different Surface Layouts and Ground Obstacles

All 15 Dreadnoughts have deviously varied their surface layouts to make it as difficult as possible for an attacker to fly above them. There are different obstacles on the surface that you can run into if you are not careful. Surviving requires knowledge of these layouts.

> Before you enter the surface of a new Dreadnought, we recommend you pause the mission by pressing the RUN/STOP key as soon as the carrier ship has released your fighter. Then read the following description of the Dreadnought's characteristics once again and memorize these "flying notes".

Your flight direction in the following instructions is always on the screen to the right, towards the master runway, your landing place at the right end of the level. The flight instruction notes are in **cyan**.
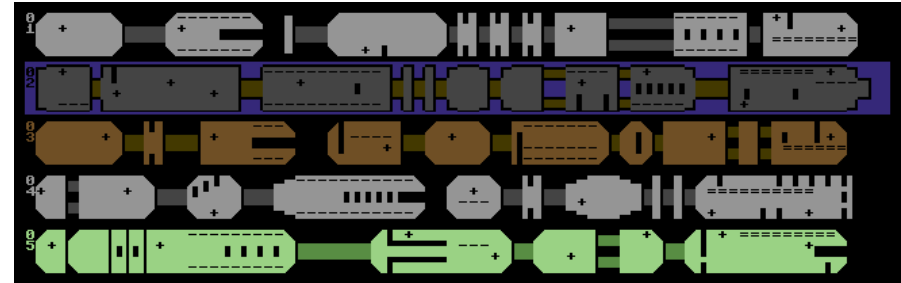
Pic 1. Layouts of Dreadnoughts 01-05

Dreadnought 01. Zinc

In the middle section after runways there are walls at the edges, so **stay in the center** of your flying area. Shortly before the master runway there are obstacles in the center between runways, **stay in the bottom**.

Dreadnought 02. Lead.

Individual surface obstacles appear in this order: top of the screen, center between runways, and finally, bottom and center next to runways. **Stay in the bottom and after the 1st runways stay in the top.**

Dreadnought 03. Copper.

At first **keep to the center**—the first surface obstacles are on the edges. After 1st runways the **only passageway is at the bottom**, then the **only passageway is at the top,** and after that, **keep to the top** to avoid walls in the center. Beware walls in the top, next to the master runway.

Dreadnought 04. Silver.

At first **keep to the bottom**, there are walls in the center and top. Next, there are poorly visible antennas between runways! After long runways **keep to the center**, walls are at the edges. Finally, obstacles around the master runway: top, bottom and at the end!

Dreadnought 05. Iron.

Stay at the edges. At first, there are walls and then antennas between runways in the center of the flying area. Then, the **only passageway is in the center**. Finally, a **very narrow passageway is near the bottom.** You have to **use FLIP** for that. (To do a FLIP, a 90-degree roll, press and hold the joystick button while moving the joystick up or down.)
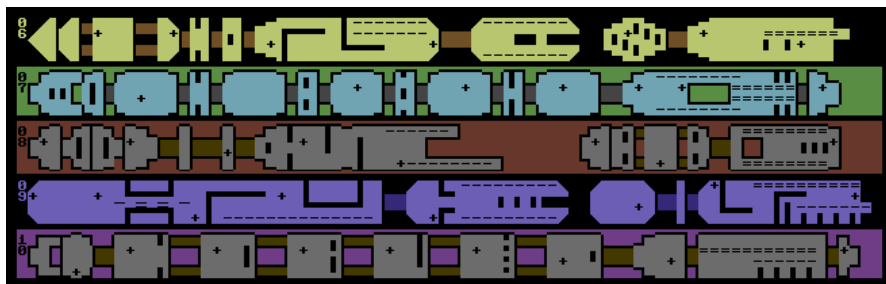
Pic 2. Layouts of Dreadnoughts 06-10

Pic 3. Layouts of Dreadnoughts 11-15

Dreadnought 06. Gold.

The first walls are in the both edges and immediately after a wall in the center! **Stay at the center** and immediately after the 1st walls **change to the top**. Immediately after, there are snaking passageways. **Turn left and down and take to the bottom.** After runways **stay in the top.** Beware poorly visible barriers under the master runway!

Dreadnought 07. Platinum.

At first **keep to the edges**, then the **center** and again the **edges**. After that, there are **passageways near the edges** and at last, a **passageway in the center**. Poorly visible barriers near the end of the master runway!
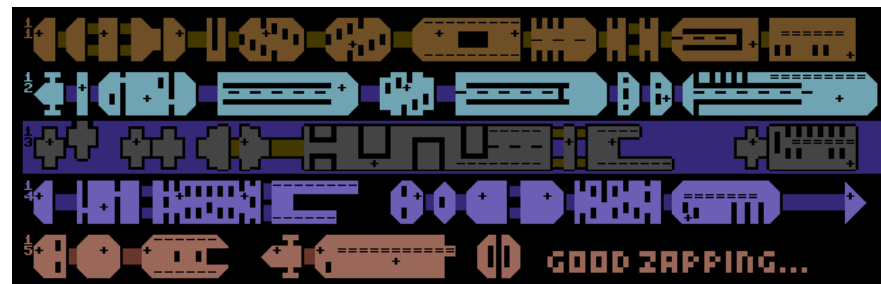
Dreadnought 08. Tungsten.

At the start, **keep to the edges** because of poorly visible antennas in the center! Then, there are **snaking passageways at the center, bottom, and top**. Fly Slowly! After the 1st runways, **stay on the edges**. Poorly visible antennas before and between the master runways!

Dreadnought 09. Iridon.

The only passageways are in order: **center, top, bottom,** and **center**. Fly slowly! Poorly visible antennas between the runways! **Keep to the bottom**. A 2nd snaking passageway is before the master runway, with passageways at the **bottom** and **top**.

Dreadnought 10. Kallisto.

Poorly visible barriers all the way! **Keep to the center**, then **the edges,** next **the center with FLIP**, then **the bottom, then the center area with FLIP** and then **keep the top**. Beware after the narrow FLIP-passageways one lonely poorly visible antenna at the center!

Dreadnought 11. Tri-Alloy.

The first passageway is at the bottom. Immediately after, a fast-snaking passageway **at the top**, **bottom,** and **top**. After the runways there are poorly visible barriers and antennas are at the edges, **keep to the center**! After antennas **keep to the top**. A narrow gap between the walls is a dead end! Beware antennas under the master runway.

Dreadnought 12. Quadmium.

There are only passageways **near the top (use FLIP)** and **near the bottom (use FLIP). Keep to the bottom**. After snaking passageways **stay in the top with FLIP**. After the antennas, the only passageway is in the **center.** Beware barriers on the left side of the master runway!

Dreadnought 13. Ergonite.

Very **low speed passageways are at the middle**, **bottom**, **top** and **bottom**. Watch out for the antennas around the master runway!

Dreadnought 14. Galactium.

FLIP-passages near the bottom and top. At the first wall section **avoid the center walls at the start and at the end otherwise keep to the center**. After runways there are poorly visible antennas in the center area! **Keep to the edges**. At the 2nd wall section **use FLIP and keep near the center.** Avoid poorly visible barriers under the master runway!

Dreadnought 15. Uridium.

Watch out for poorly visible structures just at the start! Next there are poorly visible antennas in the center, between the runways. **Keep the top**. Beware a poorly visible barrier at the bottom just before the master runway and a full-width wall section after the runway!

2. Surface Targets

There are destructible objects on the surface that will not harm you but can attract too much of your attention. Destroying surface objects can get you 10 or 25 points for small items. By destroying an enemy ship on a runway, you get 100 points. The following series of photos is based on our pilots' flight camera data.
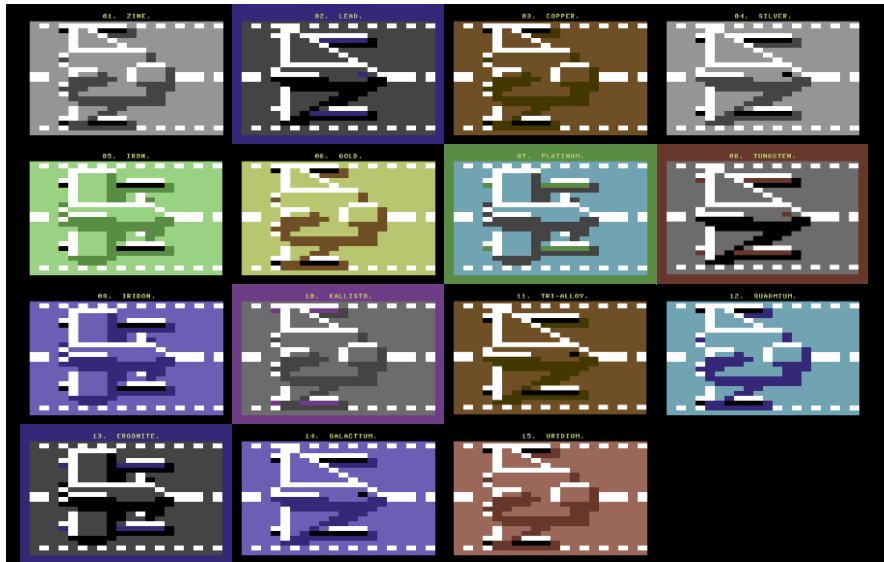
Pic 4. Enemy ship variants on the runways, each give 100 points.

3. Homing Mines

If you stay in the same place for a long time, the defence system of the Dreadnought will fire target-seeking mines at you. The mines are not your biggest problem. A skilled pilot can dodge up to three simultaneous mines, while still manoeuvring between ground obstacles.

4. Defence Fighters

Fighters are the Dreadnoughts' deadliest defence system. Enemy fighters attack in formations between one and five ships. There are 16 different types of defence fighters. Flight formations and behaviour of the fighters vary significantly depending on their type. Enemy fighters make your flying over Dreadnoughts very stressful.

Fighters can attack from your front or back. You will hear a radar warning sound when a formation is approaching. Unfortunately, the radar does not tell from which direction the fighters are coming.

For every 10,000 points, an extra pilot will be added to your squadron.

Destroying enemy fighters are the best way to get points. You can earn 100 to 750 points per fighter.

In addition, destroying an entire formation earns an extra 100 points per fighter at the end of the level.

Manta Fighter pilots may use the joystick of their choice. We strongly recommend a model with an auto-fire capability and using the auto-fire all the time above a Super-Dreadnought.

The following information on the characteristics of the enemy fighters has been obtained from our heroic pilots. The information may not be completely accurate.

Enemy fighter #01 - **500 points**
- Occurs on levels: 2-5, 7, 10, 11, 13, and 15
- Two different formations, 1 or 5 fighters
- Fast

Enemy fighter #02 - **150 points**
- Occurs on levels: 2, 4, 5, 8, 10-12, 14, and 15
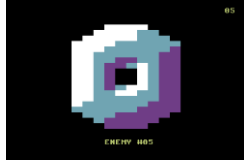- Only one formation, 5 fighters
- Very fast

Enemy fighter #03 - **750 points**
- Occurs on levels: 1, 5-7, and 9-14
- Three different formations, 2-4 fighters
- Very fast

Enemy fighter #04 - **750 points**
- Occurs on levels: 6, 8, 9, 11-13, and 15
- Two different formations, 3 or 5 fighters
- Very fast

Enemy fighter #05 - **100 points**
- Occurs on levels: all 1-15
- At least 4 different formations, 3-5 fighters
- Moderate or fast

Enemy fighter #06 - **100 points**
- Occurs on levels: 1, 3, 4, 6, and 10-15
- Two different formations, 5 fighters
- Very slow, formation can stop for a while

Enemy fighter #07 - **750 points**
- Occurs on levels: 4, 6-12, 14, and 15
- Four different formations, 2 or 4 fighters
- Moderate speed

Enemy fighter #08 - **250 points**
- Occurs on levels: 2, 4, 6, 7, 9, and 12-15
- Five different formations, always 5 fighters
- Fast

Enemy fighter #09 - **100 points**
- Occurs on levels: 1-2, 5, 7, 10-11, and 13-15
- Five different formations, always 5 fighters
- Moderate

Enemy fighter #10 - **250 points**
- Occurs on levels: 3-5, 7, 8, 10, and 14
- Three different formations, always 5 fighters
- Very fast

Enemy fighter #11 - **150 points**
- Occurs on levels: 1-3, 8, 12, 14, and 15
- Four different formations, 1, 3, or 5 fighters
- Fast

Enemy fighter #12 - **500 points**
- Occurs on levels: 2 and 5-15
- Four different formations, 1, 3, or 5 fighters
- Fast. A single fighter can stop behind you!

Enemy fighter #13 - **250 points**
- Occurs on levels: 1, 3, 5, 6, 9, 10, 13, and 15
- Two different formations, always 5 fighters
- Moderate speed

Enemy fighter #14 - **150 points**
- Occurs on levels: 1, 3, 5, 9, 10, 13, and 14
- Two different formations, 4 or 5 fighters
- Fast

Enemy fighter #15 - **500 points**
- Occurs on levels: 8, 9 and, 12-15
- Two different formations, always 5 fighters
- Very fast

Enemy fighter #16 - **500 points**
- Occurs on levels: 4-9 and 11-14
- Two different formations, always 5 fighters
- Fast

5. Fuel Rod Chambers

Once you have landed to the master runway, turn off your auto-fire immediately! You can earn plenty of extra points from the fuel rod chambers. But do not stay there for too long or the enemy will have time to find and destroy your ship on the master runway. If time runs out, you will surely lose your life.

In our experience, the three lowest bonuses at the fuel rod chamber can be captured by using your reflexes. With a fourth and higher bonuses, the chance of success is at least 50% when you close your eyes! Just use the Force.

> The fuel rod chamber bonuses are important in accomplishing our mission. Because you can get almost half of the 10,000 points needed for this "slot game" to attract an additional pilot to join your squadron.

If you have successfully solved the fuel rod chamber, the Dreadnought will be evaporated. While still admiring the destruction of the enemy battleship, you can put on your auto-fire and destroy leftover surface targets to earn some loose extra points.

PS. Sorry, we are asking for this. If you have received a deadly number of hits, please, kindly turn off the auto-fire as your last action. Otherwise, the next pilot will not be able to enter to his/her mission.

The Demo

Our pilot aces **Pushead** and **Worrior1** have put together a one-file demo where you can take a closer look at your Manta Fighter and the enemy fighters. You can watch and browse the demo on your personal Commodore 64 computer.

The demo also introduces 48 extra types of enemy fighters that are not described in this strategy guide. The enemy is constantly developing their fighters. They test starfighters from their evil allies and dig through incredibly old archives to get new development ideas. In addition, our reliable allies have reported that a large extent of their starfighters have fallen into the hands of the enemy. Soon, these friendly-looking ships may also appear in enemy defence formations over the Super-Dreadnoughts.

The demo has been produced between 2020-08-31 and 2021-04-13 by **Worrior1** (idea, concept, design, graphics & testing) and **Pushead** (code & design). **The Diad** helped in proofreading.